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gave sugar growing a great impetus by organizing expeditions of soldiers which he led into the farthest reaches of the Bay of All Saints, killing, driving out or enslaving the hostile Indian inhabitants, so as to make the area safe for settlers to move out of the city into the surrounding area and plant sugar. Mem de Sá himself built one of the largest and most productive of the sugar plantations in the Recôncavo.[2] His lands comprised three and a half leagues along the coastline of the Bay, extending four leagues inland, and two islands.[3] This *sesmaria*—as the early land grants were called—of Mem de Sá was broken down into smaller pieces by his daughter who inherited it, and by the end of the sixteenth century, most of the *sesmarias* of the Recôncavo had similarly, been divided into plantations averaging approximately 600 to 1,000 acres. In the past 250 years, many of these have kept the same boundaries and names, but their ownership has changed hands many times and they have passed through many cycles of prosperity and depression.

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The essential form of a plantation in the Recôncavo has changed little since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the past, the entire plantation was known as an *engenho*, taking its name from the sugar-mill building which was the heart of the plantation. There were two chief types of sugar mills, one operated by water power and the other driven by traction power supplied by oxen. Before the end of slavery, steam-driven machinery had also come into use. A typical *engenho* had four main items of wealth—its lands, its buildings, the livestock and the slaves. Most of the land was, of course, planted in sugar cane, but there were also wood forests to supply firewood, pastures for the livestock, and small areas devoted to the raising of food stuffs for the personnel of the *engenho*. The buildings of an *engenho* included the sugar mill, the *sobrado*, or home of the owner, and the slave quarters. The owner's house was frequently a very large and pretentious building with one and a half or two storeys. In the Recôncavo the landowners sought to build their houses *a meia encosta*, or against the side of a hill, giving the appearance of a two-storey house in front, but only one in the rear. Such homes were frequently constructed of stone, wood and mortar, with tile roofs. The slave quarters, which were known as *senzalas*, were generally long narrow buildings with sides of mud or *taipa* and and roofs of palm fronds. The livestock of a typical *engenho* consisted of oxen, burros, horses, sheep and cows. The oxen supplied the power to turn the grinding mills when there was no water power, and they pulled the large two-wheeled carts which were used to transport the cane from the fields to the mill. Horses and burros provided transportation for the plantation owner in supervising the work in the fields, and for him and his family for visits to nearby *engenhos* and to town. Cattle and sheep grazing on the portions of the land which were fallow supplied milk and meat to the plantation community.

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